



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/524,083

08/15/2005

Humbert Chu

100325.0188US

4217

24392 7590 06/24/2010

FISH & ASSOCIATES, PC

ROBERT D. FISH

2603 Main Street

Suite 1000

Irvine, CA 92614-6232

EXAMINER

SMITH, JENNIFER A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1793

NOTIFICATION DATE

DELIVERY MODE

06/24/2010

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

rfish@fishiplaw.com

patents@fishiplaw.com

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/524,083	Applicant(s) CHU, HUMBERT	
	Examiner JENNIFER A. SMITH	Art Unit 1793	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 May 2010.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 13-20 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Application

Claims 1, 6, 12, and 13 have been amended.

Claims 1-20 are pending and presented for examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 2, and 4-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Cabrera et al. (US Patent No. 4,849,091).

In regard to newly amended claim 1, Cabrera et al. teach an apparatus and for the regeneration of a catalyst, especially in Figure 1. The regenerator has a first section (7 and 8) which receives a carbon-contaminated catalyst and air (oxygen-containing gas) through conduit (1). The catalyst and combustion gas flow upward concurrently [See Column 3, lines 54-56]. The regenerator has a second 'disengagement space' (11). **The spaces are of two different widths, with the width of the second space (11) greater than the space of the first section (7 and 8) as shown in Figure 1. The outwardly tapered portion which separates space (7) and space (11) is shown in the middle portion of Figure 1.** The riser regeneration zone (8) is operated at a higher

Art Unit: 1793

gas velocity than the other sections due to its reduced cross section [See Column 6, lines 57-59]. **Cabrera et al. teach continuously adding spent catalyst into the regenerator at a rate of 1,354,634 kg/hour [See Column 13, lines 28-30].** The primary function of the first regeneration stage comprising combustion zone (7) and riser regeneration zone (8) is to maximize coke combustion to carbon monoxide while limiting the combustion of CO to CO₂ [See Column 6, lines 56-66]. The streams in the disengaging space (10) are combined with a second regeneration gas to convert the CO from the first stage. The disengaging space has a CO₂/CO mol ratio of between 1 to 5 and of course greater than the same ratio in the regeneration gas exiting the riser [See Column 8, lines 8-11 or Column 17, lines 7-28]. **While the Cabrera reference does not teach a ratio of CO:CO₂ above 9 or substantial conversion of carbon to carbon dioxide in the first section, this represents a functional limitation.** “Note that an apparatus claim with process steps is not classified as a “hybrid” claim; instead, it is simply an apparatus claim including functional limitations.” See MPEP 2106 B. While features of an apparatus may be recited either structurally or functionally, claims directed to an apparatus must be distinguished from the prior art in terms of structure rather than function. See MPEP 2114. **The apparatus taught by the Cabrera reference is capable of operating within the limitations set in the claims based upon the optimization of flow rate, space velocity, and entrance gas constituents.** Figures 1 and 2 of Cabrera et al. are illustrated below:

Figure 1

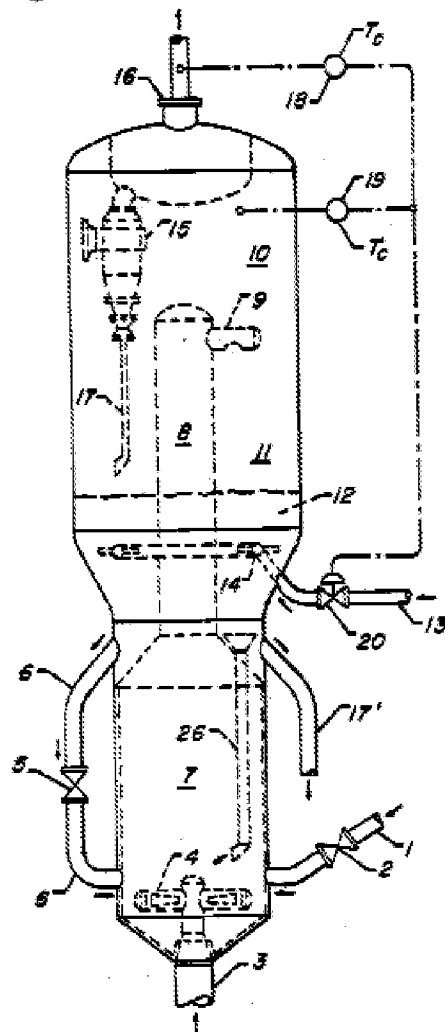
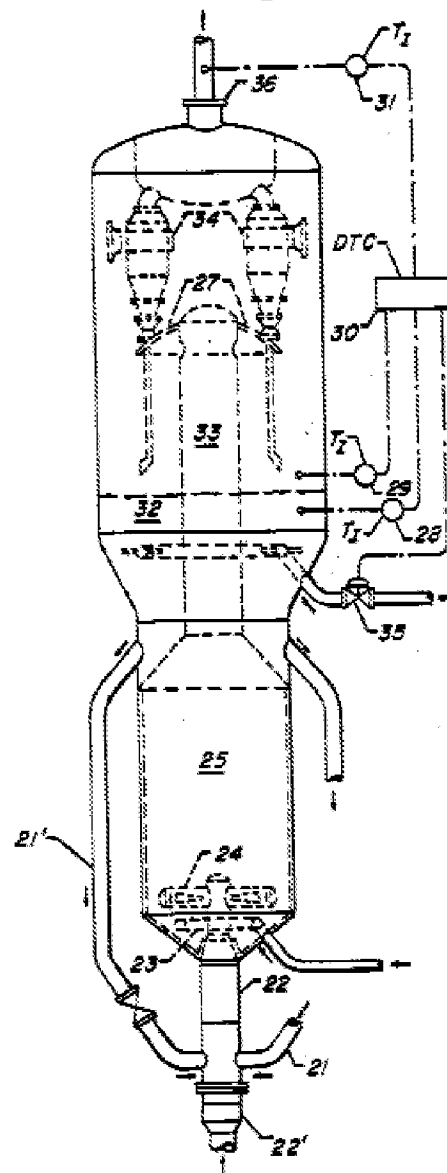


Figure 2



In regard to claim 2, Cabrera et al. teach a cylindrical regenerator arrangement
 [See Figure1].

In regard to claims 4, 8, 9, and 10, the functional limitations recited with regard to operating temperatures, amount of gas administered, and continuous process operation, do not patentably distinguish from the apparatus taught in the Cabrera reference. An apparatus claim with process steps is not classified as a “hybrid” claim; instead, it is simply an apparatus claim including functional limitations. A functional limitation is an attempt to define something by what it does, rather than by what it is (e.g., as evidenced by its specific structure or specific ingredients). There is nothing inherently wrong with defining some part of an invention in functional terms. Functional language does not, in and of itself, render a claim improper. In re Swinehart, 439 F.2d 210, 169 USPQ 226 (CCPA 1971). A functional limitation must be evaluated and considered, just like any other limitation of the claim, for what it fairly conveys to a person of ordinary skill in the pertinent art in the context in which it is used. A functional limitation is often used in association with an element, ingredient, or step of a process to define a particular capability or purpose that is served by the recited element, ingredient or step. See MPEP 2173.05. The apparatus disclosed by Cabrera is capable of operation at the claimed temperatures or flow rates and these functional limitations do not distinguish from the system of the prior art reference.

In regard to claim 5, Cabrera et al. teach a riser-type first regeneration zone that is fluidized [See Claim 1, Column 16, line 41].

In regard to claim 6, Cabrera et al. disclose the downward discharge of disengaged catalyst from the separation device (9) into the disengaging space (11) and collected in the dense bed regeneration zone [See Column 7, lines 30-34]. Any entrained particles of catalyst within the regeneration gas stream are separated and recovered downward to the dense bed zone [See Column 8, lines 27-33].

In regard to claim 7, Cabrera et al. teaches a second quantity of oxygen-containing regeneration gas typically air, enters this dense bed regeneration zone in the second section through conduit (13) and distribution device (14).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 3 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cabrera et al. (US Patent No. 4,849,091) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Green et al. (US Patent No. 4,991,521) and Scott (US Patent No. 4,313,848).

In regard to claims 3 and 12, Cabrera et al. disclose the two-section catalyst regeneration system as set forth in the claims. In Cabrera's Figure 1, the first regeneration zone is shown as having a greater height and a smaller diameter than the second separation zone but the reference fails to explicitly teach any values or ratios.

Green et al. teaches a catalyst regenerator in Figure 1. The regenerator has a first section (12) in which spent catalyst enters and a second section (13) connected by an interface (13). The cross-sectional area of the second section is 15 to 90% of the average cross-sectional area of the first section [See Column 4, lines 19-22].

Scott et al. teaches the height of the upper section of the regeneration zone containing the bed of regenerated catalyst must be sufficient to permit essentially complete combustion of carbon monoxide in the regeneration gas stream in contact with the coke free catalyst [See Column 6, lines 48-52]

One of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of Applicant's invention, would be motivated to optimize the diameter and height of the upper and lower sections of the regeneration zone as shown in the Green and Scott references in such a way to reach a level of complete regeneration of the catalyst by combustion of coke to carbon monoxide. See MPEP 2144.04 IV-A with regard to changes in size and proportion.

Claim 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cabrera et al. (US Patent No. 4,849,091) as applied to claims 1 and 13 above, and further in view of Scott (US Patent No. 4,313,848).

In regard to claim 11, the Cabrera reference fails to teach a catalyst to convert carbon monoxide to carbon dioxide in the second regenerator section.

Scott teaches the use of a carbon monoxide combustion-promoting metal [See Column 5, lines 31-33].

One of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of Applicant's invention, would be motivated to include a catalyst like that taught in Scott in the apparatus disclosed in the Green reference to enhance the rate of carbon monoxide burning [See Scott, Column 5, lines 41-43].

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 13-20 are allowable. As allowable subject matter has been indicated, applicant's reply must either comply with all formal requirements or specifically traverse each requirement not complied with. See 37 CFR 1.111(b) and MPEP § 707.07(a). The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Art Unit: 1793

The closest prior art on record – Cabrera et al. - teaches a process for the regeneration of a catalyst in a regenerator vessel shown in Figure 1. The regenerator has a first section (7 and 8) which receives a carbon-contaminated catalyst and air (oxygen-containing gas) through conduit (1). The catalyst and combustion gas flow upward concurrently [See Column 3, lines 54-56]. The regenerator has a second 'disengagement space' (11). The spaces are of two different widths. The riser regeneration zone (8) is operated at a higher gas velocity than the other sections due to its reduced cross section [See Column 6, lines 57-59]. The primary function of the first regeneration stage comprising combustion zone (7) and riser regeneration zone (8) is to maximize coke combustion to carbon monoxide while limiting the combustion of CO to CO₂ [See Column 6, lines 56-66]. The streams in the disengaging space (10) are combined with a second regeneration gas to convert the CO from the first stage. The disengaging space has a CO₂/CO mol ratio of between 1 to 5 and of course greater than the same ratio in the regeneration gas exiting the riser [See Column 8, lines 8-11 or Column 17, lines 7-28]. The Cabrera reference fails to teach the regeneration of all the catalyst and a ratio of CO:CO₂ above 9 in the first section. Instead Cabrera and the other prior art on record teaches partially regenerating the catalyst in a two-step process. Furthermore, it would not be within the level of one of skill in the art to perform all of the catalyst regeneration process in the first section based on the teachings of the prior art.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments, filed 05/04/2010, with respect to the rejection) of claims 1-12 have been fully considered in view of Applicant's amendments to the claims. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of the prior art on record.

Applicants argue the Cabrera reference does not teach the claim limitations - namely the first and second spaces in the reactor vessel, a tapered transition portion, and a second width that is greater than the first width. These arguments are not persuasive. Based on Cabrera's Figure 1, the regenerator has a first section (7 and 8) which receives a carbon-contaminated catalyst and air (oxygen-containing gas) through conduit (1). The catalyst and combustion gas flow upward concurrently [See Column 3, lines 54-56]. The regenerator has a second 'disengagement space' (11). **The spaces are of two different widths, with the width of the second space (11) greater than the space of the first section (7 and 8) as shown in Figure 1. The outwardly tapered portion which separates space (7) and space (11) is shown in the middle portion of Figure 1** and separates the first and second sections similar to what is interpreted as Scenario B in Applicant's arguments. The primary function of the first regeneration stage comprising combustion zone (7) and riser regeneration zone (8) is to maximize coke combustion to carbon monoxide while limiting the combustion of CO to CO₂ [See Column 6, lines 56-66]. The streams in the disengaging space (10) are combined with a second regeneration gas to convert the CO from the first stage.

Applicants argue Cabrera teaches away from the configuration as taught by Green and Scott. This is not found persuasive because based on the disclosure of the Green and Scott references one of skill would be motivated to optimize the diameter and height of the upper and lower sections of the regeneration zone in such a way to reach a level of complete regeneration of the catalyst by combustion of coke to carbon monoxide when the Cabrera reference does not give preferred sizes or ratios. See MPEP 2144.04 IV-A with regard to changes in size and proportion.

Applicants argue the prior art references do not teach regenerating substantially all of the catalyst in the first section. Applicant's arguments, filed 05/04/2010, with respect to the prior art rejections of claims 13-20 have been fully considered and are persuasive in view of Applicant's amendments to the claims. The rejections have been withdrawn and the claims have been indicated as allowable.

Conclusion

Claims 1-12 are rejected.

Claims 13-20 are indicated as allowable.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Art Unit: 1793

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JENNIFER A. SMITH whose telephone number is (571)270-3599. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday, 9:30am to 6:00pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jerry Lorengo can be reached on (571)272-1233. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1793

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/J.A. LORENZO/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1793

Jennifer A. Smith
June 17, 2010
Art Unit 1793